

**Statement by James B. Warlick  
Ambassador-Designate to Bulgaria  
Senate Foreign Relations Committee  
November 18, 2009**

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am privileged to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the next American Ambassador to Bulgaria. I am honored by the confidence expressed by President Obama and Secretary Clinton through this nomination. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with this Committee and other Members of Congress to advance our nation's interests in Bulgaria and in the region.

I am pleased that my wife, Mary, a career Foreign Service Officer nominated by the President to serve as Ambassador to Serbia, is on the same panel. She, along with our three children – Jamie, Jason, and Jordan – have provided support as we have served around the world to advance our country's interests. I am also pleased that my mother, Rose Warlick, could join us today.

For more than two decades, I have served as a career diplomat in the Department of State. Overseas, I have had assignments in Europe, South and Southeast Asia, and the Middle East, including Iraq. Domestically, I have been responsible for U.S. policy at the United Nations and other multilateral organizations and for political-military and security issues for

Europe and the former Soviet Union. These experiences have prepared me for the challenges and responsibilities as Chief of Mission at Embassy Sofia.

Bulgaria is a close partner in the international community as a NATO ally since March 2004 and a member of the European Union since January 2007. Bulgarian troops fought beside us in Iraq and are with us today in Afghanistan, where close to 500 soldiers are part of the NATO force. Bulgaria is a source of peace and stability in the region and has contributed peacekeeping forces in Bosnia and Kosovo.

U.S.- Bulgarian cooperation is deep and our relations are excellent. U.S. military units train in Bulgaria with Bulgarian troops. Bulgaria has accomplished economic, local governance, and institutional reforms. U.S. companies have participated in Bulgaria's economic upswing with the United States being the only non-European country ranked among Bulgaria's top ten investors.

If confirmed, I will continue to build a relationship based on mutual respect and a deep friendship between the people of Bulgaria and the United States. I will listen to Bulgarian concerns and be an advocate for America and our values. I will work to:

- Deepen cooperation with Bulgaria on international peace and security, especially on overseas military operations; and assist in Bulgaria's military modernization;

- Promote energy security through transparency, diversification of supplies, and energy efficiency;
- Support Bulgaria's efforts to promote the rule of law and implement legal and judicial reforms to combat corruption and organized crime;
- Expand bilateral trade and economic relations, helping U.S. businesses to find investment and marketing opportunities and encouraging Bulgaria to strengthen and improve its business climate; and,
- Develop deeper ties of cooperation through people-to-people programs that highlight the strengths of our two societies.

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to appear before you. I would be pleased to answer any questions that you may have.